GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Prepared Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

for

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education

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Photograph by Albert G. Robinson

ROCK CREEK PARK: WASHINGTON, D. C.

"To Rock Creek Park there is nothing comparable in any Capital City of Europe"—A British verdict of the National Capital's largest park. (See Bulletin No. 1.)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

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The World's Most Beautiful Capital

ONCE the coming of spring was marked, in Washington, D. C., by the arrival of hundreds of Americans who wished to see their Capital City; among them large numbers of school children.

Now Washington is crowded all the time, both with workers and visitors, for since the entry of this country into the World War the city has become, figuratively speaking, a World Capital.

"It is impossible to live in Washington and not be struck by some peculiar features and some peculiar beauties which your city possesses," wrote Viscount James Bryce to the National Geographic Society. Viscount Bryce formerly was British Ambassador to the United States. He understood America so well that his book, "The American Commonwealth," is widely used in schools.

Potomac's Falls a "Noble Cataract."

"No European city has so noble a cataract in its vicinity as the Great Falls of the Potomac—a magnificent piece of scenery which you will, of course, always preserve," he continued.

"Vienna has some picturesque country, hills and woods and rocks within a distance of 25 or 30 miles. London also has very pleasing landscapes of a softer type within about that distance; but I know of no great city in Europe (except Constantinople) that has quite close, in its very environs, such beautiful scenery as has Washington in Rock Creek Park and in many of the woods that stretch along the Potomac on the north and also on the south side, with the broad river in the center and richly wooded slopes descending boldly to it on each side.

"You have not a beautiful arm of the sea at your doors, as has Constantinople, nor the magnificent mountains that surround the capitals of Rio Janeiro or Santiago de Chile, nor such a bay, or rather land-locked gulf, as that of San Francisco, with its splendid passage out to the ocean; but those are very rare things, of which there are few in the world. As capitals go, few indeed, are so advantageously situated in respect to natural charms as is Washington.

Berlin Built in a Flat, Sandy Waste

"Take Berlin. It stands in a sandy waste, perfectly flat, with here and there a swampy pond or lake, and a sluggish stream meanders through it. Parts of the environs have, however, been well planted with trees, and this redeems the city to some extent. It has become, through the efforts of the government and its own citizens, an imposing city; but the environs can never be beautiful, because Nature has been very ungracious.

"Take Petrograd. Petrograd has a splendid water front facing its grand river, the Neva, with its vast rush of cold green water, covered with ice in

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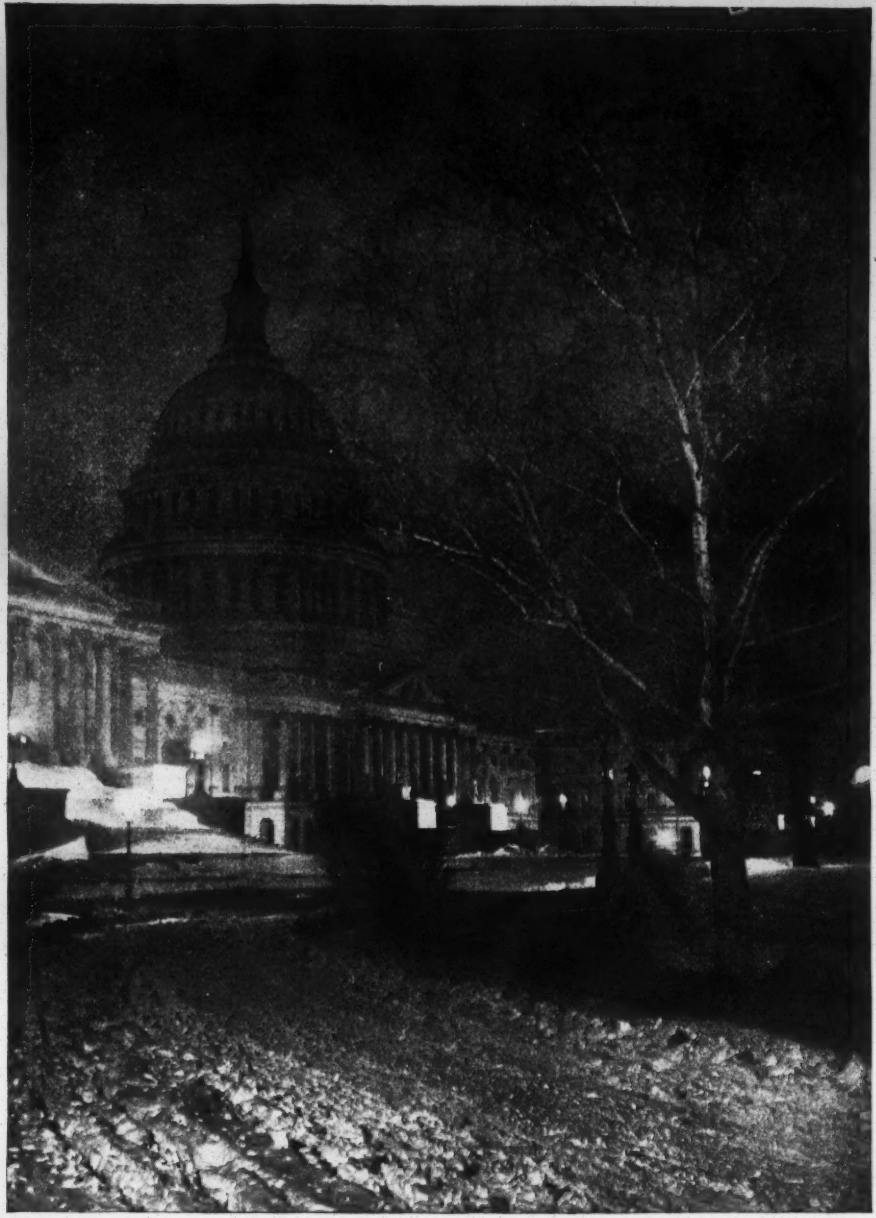

Photograph from "Washington, The Nation's Capital."
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THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL ON A WINTER'S NIGHT

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Ekaterinburg: Named for a Peasant Girl Who Learned to Rule Russia But Never to Dress Tastefully

A TRAGIC interest will attach itself to Ekaterinburg henceforth, now that it seems virtually certain that the Czar and his family were imprisoned and executed there. This East Russian city also was headquarters of the Kolchak government before it was overrun by the Bolsheviki.

Ekaterinburg, geographically, was well adapted to be a channel for the Siberian government to spread its influence and oppose Bolshevism in European Russia. It is the most important city in the Ural Mountains, lying about 310 miles, by rail, southeast of the city of Perm, and in the erstwhile government of that name. Two-thirds of the Perm district lies in Russia and one-third in Siberia. Through Ekaterinburg passed the great Siberian highway.

Ivan III sent German spies into what he regarded as a Promised Land of natural resources, and when they brought back favorable reports the task of developing one of the richest mining regions in the one-time empire began.

This Architect a "Jack of All Trades."

This same Ivan III laid the foundation of Russia's material progress in other ways. He summoned an architect from Venice who was commissioned not only to build palaces and churches, but to make big bells, cannons, "to fire off the said cannons, and to make every sort of castings very cunningly." His name was Murcli, but small wonder that he was nicknamed Aristotle. For these Protean services he received ten roubles a month.

As early as the eleventh century Novgorod began to exact tribute from the Perm district and to send settlers there. But when Ivan III, four centuries later, reached out from Moscow to Novgorod, deported a thousand of the wealthy families, and sent Moscow patricians to take their places, Perm was automatically released from Novgorod domination.

But the development of the mine region of the east Urals began with Peter the Great, during whose time Ekaterinburg, the Scranton of the Urals, was founded. It was as slow in growing as were many of Peter's reforms in taking root. In contrast to the radical experiments now launched before Lenine's breakfast in Russia it is interesting to recall the storm of protest against the census instituted by Peter, because it was a "profane numbering of the people;" or against the change in the calendar, assailed as an effort to destroy "the years of Our Lord," and of that freakish, if harmless, edict requiring beards to be shaved off, which was regarded as an insidious scheme to disfigure the "image of God" so Christ would not recognize His own at the Judgment Day.

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winter and chilling the air, and seeming to chill the landscape in summer. That, however, is the only beauty Petrograd has. The country is flat and in many places water-logged, owing to the numerous pools and swamps. It has no natural attraction either in its immediate or more distant environs, except the stream of Neva.

"Paris, again, has some agreeable landscapes within reach, but nothing at all striking, nothing nearly so fine in the lines of its scenery as the hills that inclose the valley in which Washington lies, and no such charm of a still wild forest as Washington affords. The Seine, too, is a stream not to be compared to your Potomac.

"The same thing may be said of Madrid. It stands on a level, and the mountains are too distant to come effectively into the landscape, and its only water is a wretched little brooklet called the Manzanares. They tell a story there about a remark attributed to Alexandre Dumas when he visited Madrid. He was taken to the lofty bridge which spans the ravine at the bottom of which the rivulet flows. The day was hot and, being thirsty, he asked for a glass of water. They brought him the water, and he was about to drink, when looking down and catching sight of the streamlet, he said, 'No, take it away; give it to that poor river; it needs a drink more than I do.'

"Then there is our English London, which stands in a rather tame country. It is true that there are some charming bits of quiet and pretty rural scenery in Surrey and Sussex, within a distance of from 20 to 30 miles, and there are pleasing beech woods covering the chalky hills of Bucks. Yet Nature has done nothing for London comparable to what she has done for Washington. The Thames, although it fills up pretty well at high tide, is nowise comparable for volume or beauty of surroundings to your own Potomac."

Photograph by Albert G. Robinson

A SUMMER SCENE IN ROCK CREEK PARK

Compare the June beauty of Rock Creek Park with the mid-winter scene shown on cover page. "Along one part of the stream there are places where the creek is deep and stagnant, with sandy pools; at other places the water runs swiftly, and there are ripples in the stream and many tiny cascades, where the water splashes over ridges of rock and twists round huge boulders."

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Togoland: Which Was Germany's Prize Colony

(This is the third of a series of bulletins on the places and peoples of Africa.)

TOGOLAND, one of the earliest and richest of German colonies, has been lost to her. This African area is shaped like a hogshead, with a 32-mile base resting on the Gulf of Guinea, its sides swelling to more than three times that width, crowding the British Gold Coast possessions to the west, French Dahomey on the east, and its narrow top tapering into the Niger region.

Germany annexed Togoland in 1884, the year she launched upon her colonial expansion with the acquisition also of northeastern New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago. Togoland was the first colony to dispense with imperial subsidy.

Along the seacoast Togoland's soil is rich and sandy, its climate warm and moist. The hinterland is higher, wooded and drier, but seldom arid. Thus the land is adapted to a wide variety of products, among which the growing of coconuts, corn, rice, tobacco and coffee already has been highly successful. The exports include considerable quantities of ivory, kernels, copra, palm oil and rubber.

Germans Preferred America to "Fatherland's" Colonies.

This colony affords a commentary upon Germany's application of bureaucratic methods to her possessions. Despite heavy German emigration to the United States and South America, and despite her effort to divert this flow to her colonies, only about 300 Germans were to be found among the million natives of Togoland in 1910. Most of the 300 were engaged in government service, either in the coast cities of Lome, a made-to-order town which Germany planted on the site of a fishing village, and Little Popo, or the inland government stations at Misahohe or Bismarckburg.

Togoland lies along the famous Slave Coast of Africa. Behind the treacherous shoals and bars slave traders defied cruisers from the shelter of lagoons and inlets that abound along the shores where they obtained their human stock in trade. They found the native chiefs, especially the Dahomeys, coastal people of Togoland as well as of Dahomey, only too ready to barter human beings for rum and trinkets. Tribal leaders made forays to supply the demand. Frequently they burned villages by night and corralled the inhabitants when they fled.

Northern tribes of Togoland are mostly Hausa, a mixed negro race, who have become civilized and industrious. But the Dahomeys, in the south, present a curious blend of shrewdness, cruelty, and superstition. Small, robust and athletic, they climb trees like monkeys, easily become fluent linguists, but cling to fetichism and still practice cannibalism.

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From Peasant Girl to Russia's Throne.

Peter named the city for his wife, later the Tsaritza Catherine I, that strange figure in Russia's bizarre history who was daughter of a yeoman, foster child of a humble pastor, wife of a Swedish dragoon, sold after being taken prisoner-of-war to a Russian Prince, wife of Peter the Great, who crowned her empress and cleared the way for her succession to the throne.

No queen of proudest birth ever did (or would have wished to) adorn herself as did erstwhile Martha Skovronsky at the coronation ceremonies. Her crown bore more than 2,500 gems, with a walnut-size ruby sustaining a bejeweled cross.

When Peter took her to Berlin the daughter of Emperor Frederick William, father of Frederick the Great, wrote in a volume preserved as her memoirs, that the empress appeared to be low born, and that she wore so many decorations that her dress rattled. The Paris verdict of her remains unknown because Peter left her at Amsterdam when he went to the French capital.

Her Head-dress An Index of Character.

Catherine was far from beautiful; positively homely, from most accounts. But when she ascended the throne her common sense redeemed her illiteracy. Her gem-laden crown, and the luxury and power it stood for, did not turn her head, while other head-dresses tell the story of her devotion to her husband and of loyalty to her people. When she accompanied Peter in the Caspian campaign she made the supreme sacrifice (for pre-Greenwich village days) of "bobbing" her hair, and wearing a close-fitting fur cap to protect her from the sun. She also set a fashion of wearing the cocked hat of the army.

The former Russian government maintained an important mining school, chemical laboratory and gold assay office at Ekaterinburg. Imperial lapidary works were engaged in cutting and polishing malachite, marble, porphyry and jasper and the government mint for copper coins was located there.

The city also was important industrially and commercially. Paper, soap, candles, and machinery were manufactured. It had flour mills and tanneries. Its trade was in cereals, silk goods, iron and cattle.

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Carlsbad: Where Mineral and Political Springs Are Ever Boiling

WHEN Europe's best advertised health resort awoke one morning to find its post-office address changed from Carlsbad, Austria, to Karlo-Vivari, Czecho-Slovakia, the mental shock to the German inhabitants must have been somewhat like the occasional explosions of its hidden wells, from which its famous mineral waters come.

Though it is located in Bohemia, the Englishman had introduced afternoon tea, and the American had made tennis popular, but the 17,000 permanent residents who remained in Carlsbad after the annual influx of some 70,000 visitors were essentially German, and Karlo-Vivari remains so, according to the press reports.

Hence it is easy to understand how this island of Germans, under Czech rule, soon approached a political boiling point. Dispatches told of the open display of Emperor Franz Joseph's portrait for a time, and of the refusal of the native sons, who live by means of the saline waters and salt derivatives, to call Carlsbad by any other name.

Tradition had it, and the inhabitants preferred to believe, that Emperor Charles IV discovered the healing power of the waters that gush through the vents of the mammoth lid that nature clapped down over a seething cauldron far beneath the surface.

Exercise Helped Them—Though Patients Thanked the Springs.

Atop this vast subterranean lake of molten mineral and hissing steam a river, the Tepel, flows lazily down a narrow valley whose slopes are softened by beautiful trees and traversed by winding trails and paths. Among these, some physicians intimate, the health hunters gained the rosy cheeks and buoyant spirits for which the springs received overmuch credit.

It is just before the Tepel enters the Eger that the underground streams pierce the crust at numerous points, and furnish the waters, used for bathing and drinking by those who could afford to go there; and either bottled or boiled down by the millions of gallons, for its salt and soda content, and shipped to all quarters of the globe.

During the season at pre-war Carlsbad the guest at any of the numerous hotels would be awakened at 6 o'clock, or even earlier, and would arise to join the procession toward the springs. At a popular one, such as the Sprudel, from which flow 440 gallons of water a minute, at a temperature of 163 degrees, Fahr., he might have to wait 15 or 20 minutes until a white-capped maid served him. For his protection, large glass covers were erected over many of the springs, and from an aeroplane Carlsbad might resemble a field of conservatories.

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Warrior Women Formed King's Bodyguard.

The King of the Dahomeys is a tribal Deity. He controls the lives and property of his subjects. Formerly he was regarded as more ethereal than human; he was believed to require neither food nor sleep. He strengthened that impression by having all food served to him in solitude, and hearing petitions from behind a screen. Consultation with his ministers was carried on through his wives, who were state dignitaries. Genuine Amazons formed his bodyguard, and these warrior women were reputed to be as fearless and brave as those of Greek mythology, and much more cruel.

Only the sons of the Dada, or Queen, were regarded as heirs. From among the Amazons the sovereign selected other wives, but all except the favored few were celibates. The king was considered the father of all his subjects.

Dahomey children were taken from their mothers at an early age and given to other families so they might form no ties which would conflict with their allegiance to the king.

Snakes Held in High Esteem.

Any object blessed by the Dahomey priests became a fetich. Snakes were held in special esteem. Formerly children were regularly sacrificed and human beings were roasted for food. Tribal dances were amazingly intricate, some lasting 36 hours. So imbued were the Dahomeys with belief in immortality that they readily volunteered for sacrifice and the wives of Dahomey, like those of India, often chose to die when their husbands did.

Togoland's area is about equal to that of Maine. Two northern towns, Yendi and Sansane Mangu, lie along the caravan route from Ashanti to the Niger region.

Germany edged into the Slave Coast because, in 1884, the narrow portion still ruled by the King of Togo was the only part from the Gambia to the Niger not controlled by some civilized power. Bremen merchants had stations there. So Germans persuaded the Togo ruler to place Togoland under the suzerainty of Germany. Subsequently the Germans made claims to inland territory which brought about boundary disputes with France and Great Britain until the frontiers were fixed in 1 99.

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Smyrna: An Ancient and Changeful City

SMYRNA is one of the Sultan's highly prized cities lost to Turkish dominion. Greek rule may restore this city to its former glory.

Smyrna, too often known only to the western peoples as "the place where the rugs come from," though they do not, vies with Damascus in the claim of being the oldest city in the world. One of the seven cities of the Christian church in Asia Minor, it is also among the seven cities that claim Homer. You will recall the lines:

"Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead
Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

It has passed through all cycles of the average city's history time and time again, at one period having a government which suggests that of the Russian soviets, and it has survived earthquakes, plagues, and destructive wars.

A City of Many Rulers.

The known history of Smyrna runs back to a thousand years B. C. and it may have flourished in the unrecorded ages before that remote time.

It was under the Lydians that the once proud city was split into a series of communities, which effectively tied its political and military hands, so that this dean among Grecian cities cut little figure in the golden era of Hellenic culture.

The new Smyrna, as rebuilt by Alexander, was moved about three miles south of the older site which was to the northeast of the land-locked gulf of the same name. Nestling between the "muddy green" waters of this gulf and the succession of hills behind it, Smyrna always was a city beautiful, a fact which was extolled upon coins.

Coins Bore the Likeness of Homer.

Ancient coins also bore the likeness of Homer, whose identity with the older Smyrna seems fairly well founded because the Meles river, with its cave nearby that formed the Homeric "den" and "study," flowed lazily past the ancient city, though its waters since have been diverted to other and disputed channels.

Today a thriving port, despite the Turkish disinclination to modernize its harbor facilities, Smyrna is a cosmopolitan, some say nondescript, city of the size of New Orleans. The reason for the less flattering appellation is summed up by Charles Dudley Warner, who said: "One of the most ancient cities on the globe, it has no appearance of antiquity; containing all nationalities, it has no nationality; it is an Asiatic city with a European face; it produces nothing, it exchanges everything."

Among its heaviest exports, before the World War, when nearly 8,000 ships visited there yearly, were figs, tobacco, silk, raisins and carpets.

When Metternich Clamped Down the Lid.

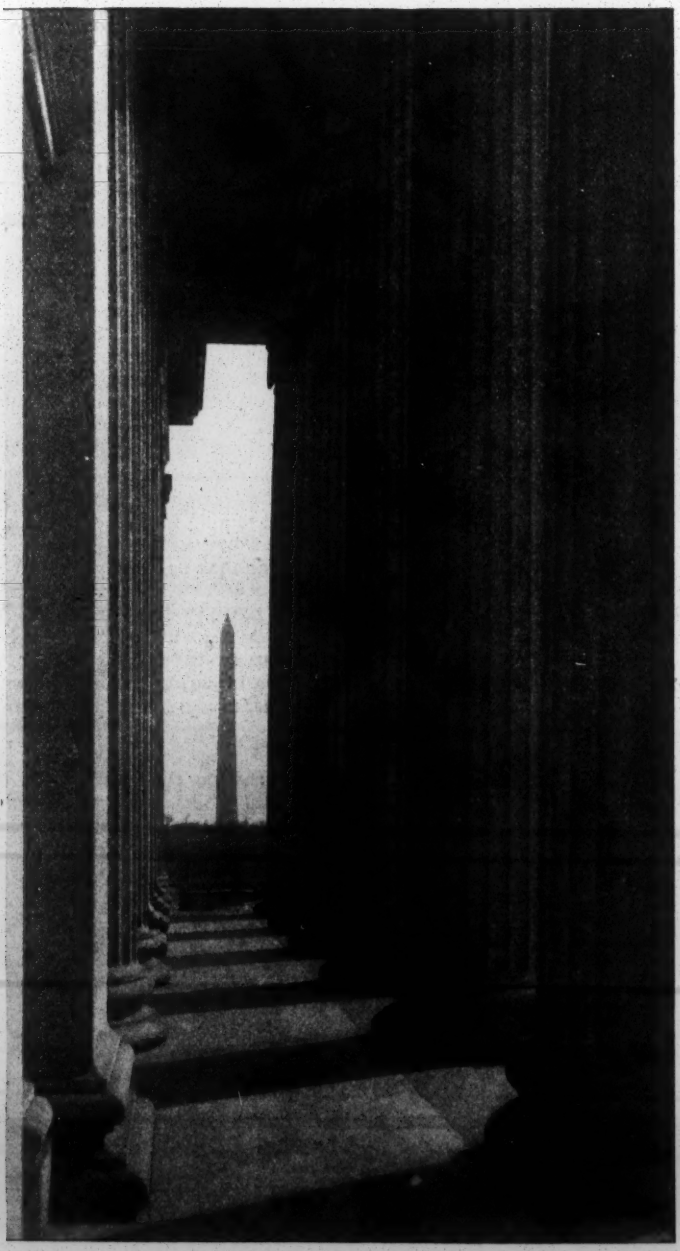
But to linger too long among the springs of Carlsbad is to miss its history. Here there is a grim sort of symbolism. For it was here, just 100 years ago last August, that Metternich plotted to clamp down the lid upon free speech, free press, and untrammeled teaching in the German states.

There were signs that liberal agitation among the Germans was reaching the boiling point. Autocracy was threatened. Prince Metternich, of Austria, arranged to have sympathetic representatives from Austria, Prussia and seven other states of the German confederation at Carlsbad, and then called them together in a hurry, under pretext of need for summary action.

Out of that conference came the famous "Carlsbad Decrees," and there can be little doubt but that the tinder for the explosion in 1914 was lighted at Carlsbad. There was formulated the policy, later carried to a relentless conclusion by the German Empire, of press censorship, of state regulation of teaching in universities and all other schools, and a commission was created to inquire into utterances opposed to the monarchical principle which every German state was pledged to maintain.

Only sixteen years before Metternich conceived this method of political repression, Carlsbad was nearly blown up by the forces beneath the crusted surface. Now, to quote a traveler, "The most dangerous portions are firmly battened down, under solid masonry, held together with iron and steeel, while the rest of this Metternichian policy of repression is modified by the modern idea of providing safety valves, through which rise the springs."

Capitalizing the mineral waters was the principal industry, but not the only one, of Carlsbad. In the vicinity were porcelain works, and the shopper of the days when wealth and fashion of three continents gathered there, might purchase Bohemian glass and beautiful trinkets of many kinds, representing the Czech handicraft.



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Photograph by E. L. Crandall

WASHINGTON IS A CITY OF COLUMNS

Few cities have borrowed so extensively as Washington from the architectural achievements of the past. Moreover, there are few architectural features in the New World which surpass in majesty the splendid colonnades and porticos of the United States Treasury. Seventy-two great Ionic columns, fashioned like those of the Temple of Pallas at Athens, stretch along the east front and enter into the composition of the porticos on the north, the west, and the south fronts. Here is shown a famous vista along the west side of the Treasury building.